TASK FORCE SANTA FE
TRAILBLAZER
June 1, 2002 FOR THE SOLDIERS OF THE 35th INFANTRY DIVISION
VOLUME 1/ ISSUE 5

Memorial Day Celebrated by Task Force

General McAuliffe Bust in Bastogne Town Square, and the Bastogne Soldier's Memorial.

BASTOGNE, Belgium - On May 27, Memorial Day 2002, several soldiers from B/2-130 made the trip to the Battle of the Bulge Memorial Site in Bastogne, Belgium. Several hundred people attended the religious and commemorative ceremony at the massive open-air concrete structure erected in honor of the American fallen. Over a million soldiers, on both sides, fought in Battle of the Bulge. Of the over 600,000 American soldiers there were nearly 80,000 casualties including 19,000 killed, 38,000 wounded and 23,000 captured.

On December 16, 1944 the Germans mounted their last great offensive of World War II. By throwing 500,000 troops and a 1,000 tanks into a concentrated attack they hoped to crush surprised American forces and capture the strategic harbor at Antwerp. American forces in the area took a beating but did not break. The 101st Airborne Division at Bastogne was surrounded but defied the German call for surrender. Division Commander General A.C. McAuliffe uttered the famous response to the Germans: "Nuts."

On December 27, 1944 General Patton mounted a successful breakthrough to Bastogne. The Germans, however, mounted another devastating counter-offensive resulting in fierce hand-to-hand fighting in the area. This continued through the New Year. Finally, on January

Graduates of PLDC Take Top Honors Memorial Day Weekend

GRAFENWEHR, Germany - "No one is more professional than I..." Soldiers from Task Force Santa Fe were given the opportunity to attend Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC) while here in Germany. This initial leadership training is required before a soldier may enter the ranks of the NCO corps.

Several of our Santa Fe soldiers completed the course with honors and a few were given laureates for performing above and beyond their peers. The Distinguished Leadership Award was presented to SPC Duane Clifford from HHC 2-137, while B 1-178 was doubly honored by SGT Curtis Stratton for achieving both the APFT Award (300 pts) and Distinguished Honor Graduate for a combination of course academics and attaining the Commandant's list.

Class 501-02, conducted by the 3rd Battalion, 166th Regiment (NCOA) lasted from 11-25 May 2002. SFC Allen Christianson was Master of Ceremonies for the Graduation, and the guest speaker was our own Task Force Santa Fe Command Sergeant Major Vernon Balvanz.

SPC Duane Clifford , on left, is congratulated by 1SG Michael Watkins for being selected for the PLDC Distinguished Leadership Award.

BRAVO COMPANY 2-130 LEADS THE WAY

HEIDELBERG, Germany - On May 14, 2002, SFC Glidewell and SPC White placed 3rd out of 30-teams in the 5th Signal Battalion Golf Scramble held at the Heidelberg Golf Course.

The Bravo Company soldiers finished 12-under par through 18-holes on the par 72 course. First place finished 14-under par and second was 13-under par.

SFC Glidewell is with 2nd Platoon and SPC White is with 3rd Platoon of Bravo Company, 2-130 Infantry.

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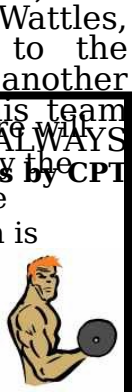
COLEMAN BARRACKS, Germany - On May 16th 2002, an EOC message was received at the Coleman Barracks front gate that a soldier from another unit was threatening to kill somebody. Red Team from 1st Platoon, B/2-130 Infantry was on duty and took charge by closing the gate, calling the MP's, and notifying the platoon leadership, 1LT Porter and SFC Light, who dispatched two motorized roving patrols to find the soldier.

Soon thereafter the roommate of the soldier was found. The roommate informed the EOC that the soldier had already departed Coleman Barracks and that the soldier was threatening to commit suicide, not kill someone. Upon the EOC re-reading the note the MP's were re-dispatched to a local bridge where the soldier was taken into custody unharmed.

The soldiers of Red Team, SGT Burton, SGT Fehrenbacher, SPC Warner and SPC Wattles, reacted quickly and professionally to the situation and helped to save the life of another soldier in distress. SGT Burton and his team epitomize the unit motto of, "ALWAYS READY!"

Stories by CPT Pedigo

POWER LIFTING CHALLENGE! There will be a power lifting competition sponsored by the 94th BSB on 29 June 2002. Location is the Pioneer Kaserne Gym. SFC William Bowen is conducting this event and is asking for assistance. Weight handlers and security personnel are needed. If interested in helping, or bei contestant, contact SFC Bowen at DSN 322-8856.



TF 2-137 Take Top Shooting Hon

Europe offers the deployed soldiers of TF 2-137 of Kansas and Illinois many training opportunities with host nation soldiers. One of these ways is to accept the challenges of the German Schützenschnur, a course of marksmanship skills that the German Army opens to foreign soldiers. This highly coveted and difficult to earn award is authorized by regulation for enlisted soldiers to wear on their Class "A" uniform.

Sixteen soldiers from 2-137th IN BN participated and qualified for the badge. 1SG Thomas Stiefermann, event coordinator for 98th ASG, noted to CSM Vorhies, " The soldiers you sent to the Schützenschnur range did an outstanding job representing your unit and Army with our German allies. This is quite an accomplishment. Your soldiers received a 100% go, which is practically unheard. Normally only four to five soldiers walk away with the Schützenschnur after spending a day at the range."

The Schützenschnur has a long and rich history. In 1720 the King of Prussia Friederich Wilhelm I, had the idea to decorate his finest rifleman with silver cords. In 1864 the medal had three classes (bronze, silver and gold). In 1871 the German counties and states were united to the German Reich and Kaiser Wilhelm II reintroduced the shooting cord for only the finest shooters. In 1935 the Reichsweher was reorganized to the Wehrmacht and the cord was kept, with the addition that it was now a lifetime award and is still not open to officers. In 1965 this shooting cord was reintroduced to the new Bundeswehr, and the three classes were defined as: Bronze (marksman), Silver (sharpshooter) and Gold (expert). The qualification is valid for a lifetime, open to foreign enlisted soldiers and still not open to officers. The rope is silver and the medallion is embossed with the German Eagle. LTC Eberhard Nickle pre
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Schützenschnur awardees from TF 2 – 13

Veterans Benefit Information At Your Fingertips

WASHINGTON, May 14, 2002 - The Department of Veterans Affairs has made its comprehensive benefits guide available for free on the Internet.

Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents is a 100-page handbook describing benefits provided by the VA and an overview of programs and services for veterans provided by other federal agencies.
http://www.va.gov/pubaff/fedben/Fedben.pdf

VA officials estimate most of America's 25 million veterans qualify for at least some VA benefits, but many are unaware of their entitlements. This handbook includes a listing of toll-free numbers, World Wide Web information resources, and VA facilities.

Most veterans are eligible for healthcare and burial
benefits. Many are also eligible for home loan guarantees, educational assistance, vocational rehabilitation, life insurance, and compensation for service-connected disabilities.

This guide explains how to access many of these benefits online. For instance, it provides a Web address and instructions for enrolling via the Internet into the VA healthcare system. The book describes in detail the
priority for care and services available. Separate sections describe specialized services available to Gulf War veterans and those exposed to Agent Orange or radiation.

The Montgomery GI Bill and other education benefits are explained in depth. Burial benefits and employment service are also covered, as are rate charts for the various forms of compensation VA provides.
The book can be purchased through the Government Printing Office for $5 for U.S.-based customers, and $6.25 for those overseas, by calling toll-free (866) 512-1800. By providing it online www.va.gov/opa/feature, the VA hopes to make the information available to more veterans.

- Story By Sgt. 1st Class Kathleen T. Rhem, USA, American Forces Press Service

Upcoming 1-149 Events

04-13 June: German Sports Badge competition (Multiple Units)
08-15 June: Schutzenschnur (A/1-131)
09-21 June: EFMB (Select Individuals)
18-28 June: Bundeswehr Leistungsabzeichen
Awards - Road March (Multiple Units)
18-21 June: EIB (Multiple Units)
23-28 June: Schutzenschnur (A/1-131)

Words From the TOC

LTC Karlas Owens Task Force 1-149 Battalion Commander

"I am an American fighting in the forces that guard my country and our way of life, I am prepared to give my life in their defense"

This is an excerpt from the Code of Conduct. It applies to ALL members of the U.S. Armed Forces, at ALL times. It is the conduct to be used while we are deployed for this mission. To achieve the standards of this code, we must be prepared physically, mentally, spiritually, and collectively.

Physical preparation involves the readying your body and equipment for the task. Both are required for success.

Mental preparation is a little more difficult. Especially when you know you've got night shift and it's a little above freezing and the weather predicts rain. Chow is bad again and Significant 6, back at home, advises the kids are sick. Focus on now.

I would hope by now that you and the "Big CO in the Sky" have come to terms. I talk to him on a regular basis.

Collectively. I can't win unless you win. We can't win unless the Squad wins. The Squad can't win if the Platoon fails. Not only must we prepare ourselves, but we must ensure our comrades are equally prepared. Cover your buddy. Help us win. The most important soldier in this organization is YOU!

"I will never forget that I am an
dedicated to the principals which
made my country free. I will trust in my God and in the United States of

The *TRAILBLAZER* is published by soldiers, for the soldiers of TASK FORCE SANTA FE

Task Force Sports:

* THE HHC 1-149th Infantry softball team improved to 3-0 overall this season with a come from behind victory against the 19th Maintenance Company, 17-15. The Aces lead by some superb hitting from their commander and shortstop CPT Tommy Black. Black hit his first out side the park homerun to go along with his many insiders that he already has. Late in the 5th inning the Aces bats came to life after being down 15-5 by scoring 6 runs and closing the gap. The opposition went down in the top half of the 6th and the Aces came back and scored 6 more in the final inning to pull it out from the jaws of defeat. "We didn't win that game, we earned it" right-center fielder, Curtis Fothergill said after the game as he limped away from a hard nosed effort. The Aces play HHC 130th Engineers on June the 5th, but before that they do have an intra-battalion game against Echo Company 1-149th Infantry (M), on the first of June.

- Story by SPC Hyatt

* TF Santa Fe Trailblazers had both triumph and defeat this week, winning early on the 20th of May against JSRC-C with a nice margin of 17 – 5. Then lost a close game against the 214th Cougars, ending 9-10 on May 22nd. The Trailblazers are gearing up this week to take on A Co. 302nd MI on June 5th.

***B/2-130 Softball off to Blistering Start!**

For B/2-130, game strategy is - whoever's not on FP duty shows up at the softball diamond.

So far that strategy has resulting in two

"TRAILBLAZER"

Needs Soldier Stories and Pictures!

The "Trailblazer" is currently looking for soldiers who will submit pictures and articles for future '*Trailblazer*' issues. Send your stories, photos, and ideas to the *Trailblazer* editor, SFC Mueller at tfbdes1opsnco@26asg.heidelberg.army.mil, call DSN 378-3243 or channel ideas and photos through your Battalion S1. All stories are welcome – duty, vacation,

Kessler. **- Story by CPT Pedigo**

Team Building Intramural Sports Day Held for HHC

66th Infantry Brigade soldiers work together to score a goal playing Ultimate Frisbee during Intramural Sports Day held at Germersheim, Germany on May 23rd.

GERMERSHEIM, Germany- When a soldier thinks about training for battle, the images of softballs, volleyballs and Frisbees are not the images that come to mind.

Those were the tools used to help train soldiers about teamwork and effort during intramural sports day at Task Force Santa Fe headquarters in Germersheim, Germany May 23rd.

"Intramural sports day is an opportunity to teach team building," said Master Sergeant Charles Walters, the event Safety Officer. "The soldiers learn to play and compete in an environment where they have to work together to win."

On intramural day, soldiers formed into teams where they competed in each of the sporting events, which included volleyball, softball, basketball and ultimate Frisbee. The team winning the most events was then recognized.

Ultimate Frisbee was the event that most participants seemed to enjoy the most. The object of the game is to pass a Frisbee to teammates down field toward a goal line. The team scores one point when a player catches the Frisbee across the goal line.

The game is fast paced. It requires teamwork and strategy to be successful, and it helps to have some guts too.

The intramural sports day also offered soldiers an opportunity to relax and spend time with fellow soldiers.

"It's a great morale booster. It's great being able to get out of uniform and have fun with the people you work with while

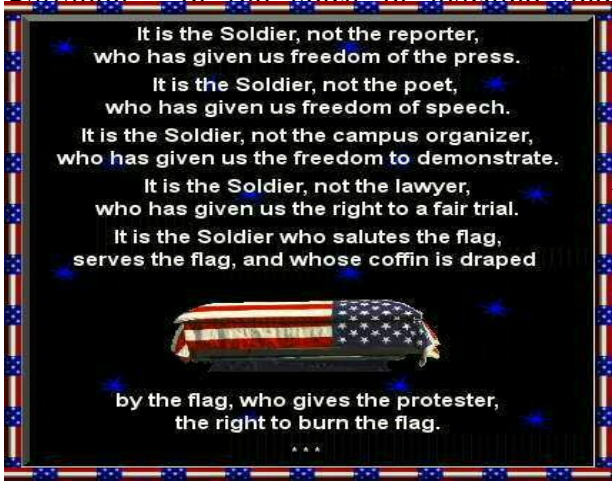
Members of the TF Command Group and LIST Slice Team take a break to pose with members of the German Logistikbrigade 2.

Taking Time to Learn From One Another

GERMERSHEIM, Germany – On May 24th several members of the German Logistikbrigade 2 visited Germersheim Army Depot to begin the sharing of information and ideas. LTC Chris Lawson, Logistical Integration Support Team (LIST) Commander, briefed the group on U.S. Logistics Doctrine to include a brief overview of the battlefield, the development of the concept of support, and the composition and capabilities of a Light Infantry Brigade. The German Logistikbrigade 2 will conduct a similar briefing for Task Force Santa Fe on 5 July.

LTC Nitsche, Logistikbrigade Commander, stated, "I am happy for this exchange and look forward to you coming to our facilities." He went on further to state there are a lot of similarities between the Logistikbrigade and a Forward Support Battalion in planning and coordination. Following the meeting, several of his staff members in attendance were eager to discuss the parallels. LTC Lawson told the group that, "we are fortunate and honored to have this opportunity to share ideas and learn from each other."

This exchange of information was a result of co-located logistics headquarters located here in Germersheim. After several discussions with the leadership of that organization it was recognized that the make up of the Logistikbrigade was very similar to that of the 634th Forward Support Battalion. In the spirit of learning and


It is the Soldier, not the reporter,
who has given us freedom of the press.
It is the Soldier, not the poet,
who has given us freedom of speech.
It is the Soldier, not the campus organizer,
who has given us the freedom to demonstrate.
It is the Soldier, not the lawyer,
who has given us the right to a fair trial.
It is the Soldier who salutes the flag,
serves the flag, and whose coffin is draped
by the flag, who gives the protester,
the right to burn the flag.

TASK FORCE SANTA FE HONORS FALLEN BROTHERS

The 35th Infantry Division did not storm the beaches of Normandy on June 6, 1944, but the trip ashore would soon come. At D+29, July 5, elements of the Division's 134th Infantry Regiment began arriving at Omaha beach. By July 7, the 137th and 320th Regiments had joined the 134th. The Division occupied a base camp ten miles inland and began final preparations for combat operations. On July 10 the Division secured its place in WW II history when the 134th and 137th Regiments began assaults on Hill 122 (named for it's height in meters). The 320th Regiment was initially held in Division reserve. Clearing this hill was vital to the success of liberating St. Lo. It did not take long for the soldiers of the 35th to make their mark. Eight grueling days were needed to capture the city, during which time, 1st Battalion of the 134th Infantry Regiment would earn a Presidential Unit Citation. The enemy occupied the high ground. Hedgerows and "sunken roads" in the area created numerous locations to ambush attacking forces. Fighting was fierce and casualties were heavy.

On May 14, 2002 a floral 35th Division patch was presented at the American Battle Monument Commission Cemetery at Normandy on behalf of all soldiers of Task Force Santa Fe. The ceremony honored the 261 heroes of the Division interred there. All were killed during the first month of combat operations in Europe. Inscribed on a wall in the G*arden of the Missing* are the names of five additional soldiers of the 35th listed as Missing in Action. Unfortunately, these 266 represent only a fraction of the Division's total losses. The remains of several hundred others were returned for burial in the United States. Of the 9,387 graves in the Normandy Cemetery, 307 contain remains known only to God. The Cemetery at Normandy is just one of 14 permanent WW II cemeteries in Europe hosting a total of 93,242 graves. Over 500,000 Americans gave their lives in WW II.

The passage of another Memorial Day and D-Day anniversary are upon us. As Task Force Santa Fe performs military operations here in Europe, it establishes a 35th Division Regimental presence here for the first time in 58 years. Remember those who served before us, those that added to the Division's legacy, those that made the ultimate sacrifice so that we may enjoy the high-priced gift of freedom. An inscription inside the chapel on the Normandy